



countdown

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STS-128 crew has busy schedule at KSC before launch



◆ Shuttle Update:

At press time Wednesday, the STS-128 crew was due to arrive at KSC about 7:30 p.m. to prepare for launch. Over the next four days, crew members will be checking out their launch and entry suits and flight data files. The commander and pilot will practice landings in the Shuttle Training Aircraft. Astronauts will receive medical exams. On Sunday, the astronauts will receive an orbiter, payload and weather briefing from the Ascent Team of flight controllers at Mission Control in Houston. Liftoff is scheduled for 1:36 a.m. Tuesday.

◆ **ELV Update:** The Space Tracking and Surveillance System-Demonstrators Program is scheduled to launch Sept. 15 from CCAFS Launch Pad 17-B. Work on the pad was on hold last week while the launch team focused on the Air Force Delta II launch Monday. The launch team has resumed processing on the pad for STSS-Demo.

On the Solar Dynamics Observatory, the Ka-band RF downlink checkouts are complete. The instrument module has been cleaned, and a visual inspection for the Extreme Ultraviolet Variability Experiment was performed.

■ **KEA-46 Space Systems Validation And Verification** — The KSC Engineering Academy will host Dr. Randy Liefer, instructor for Academy of Program and Project Engineering Leadership, or APPEL, on Aug. 27, from 3 to 4 p.m. in the KSC Training Auditorium. Dr. Liefer will present an overview of the APPEL

course, “Space Systems Verification and Validation,” defining verification and validation, or V&V, and explaining where it fits in Systems Engineering. He’ll also discuss the five V&V activities. NASA and KSC contractor personnel are invited to attend.

Questions and/or comments should be sent to KSC-Engineering-Academy@mail.nasa.gov. To view future listings, or video/PDF versions of past KEA events, please visit: <http://kea.ksc.nasa.gov>. Please check the Web site for updates as events are subject to change.

■ **FIRST LEGO League Coach Training** — Training is being offered for adults interested in coaching FIRST LEGO League teams. The advanced class will be Saturday at Cape View Elementary School in Cape Canaveral. Registration and details are on line at: <http://www.flrobotics.org/Training.htm>.

Grant applications are also being accepted for team sponsorship. Information is on line at: <http://www.flrobotics.org/Grants2009.htm>.



■ **Vulture Study at KSC** — The NASA Environmental Management Branch, in collaboration with Dynamac and the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, has initiated a project to improve our understanding of vulture populations at KSC. Black vultures and turkey vultures are being fitted with both satellite GPS and radio transmitters, which will allow biologists to track vul-

ture movements, activity patterns and habitat use on KSC.

In addition, vultures are being tagged with white wing tags on their right wings, each with a unique three-letter code. The tags will allow biologists to study population dynamics and movement patterns over the next 3-5 years.

These efforts will improve our understanding of vulture populations on KSC, allowing managers to better access the risk to flight operations and other mission critical activities, as well as better manage nuisance vulture problems throughout KSC. The wing tags are clearly visible on perched birds and can be read using binoculars.

Please report all sightings of tagged vultures including: 1) tag ID, 2) time, 3) location, 4) number of vultures, and 4) a brief description of the activity (e.g., roosting, loafing on the ground, feeding at a carcass) to Eric Stolen at Dynamac, at 476-4119 or e-mail eric.d.stolen@ksc.nasa.gov.

If you have any questions, contact NASA Environmental Management at 867-8448.

■ **Reminder** — Tour de KSC is coming Oct. 17. The bike ride event on center is just for employees and a limited number of guests.

Countdown is published every Tuesday & Thursday for NASA KSC employees. Deadlines are 9 a.m. Mondays & Wednesdays. E-mail news to anita.l.barret@nasa.gov. For questions or information, e-mail or call 867-2815. You can also find PDF editions of *Countdown* on the Web at: http://www.nasa.gov/centers/kennedy/news/countdown/countdown_toc.html.